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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/601,619	06/23/2003	Napier Fulton Breen JR.	9158-2IP	8826
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MYERS BIGEL SIBLEY & SAJOVEC PO BOX 37428 RALEIGH, NC 27627			EXAMINER ZURITA, JAMES H	
			ART UNIT 3625	PAPER NUMBER

DATE MAILED: 06/08/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

**Office Action Summary**

Application No.

10/601,619

Applicant(s)

BREEN ET AL.

Examiner

James H. Zurita

Art Unit

3625

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --  
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 1 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

**Status**

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 23 June 2003.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

**Disposition of Claims**

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-78 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☒ Claim(s) 1-78 are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

**Application Papers**

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on \_\_\_\_\_ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.  
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).  
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

**Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119**

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some \* c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
  2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.
  3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- \* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

**Attachment(s)**

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)   | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)<br>Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)                                   | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)             |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)<br>Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____  |

**DETAILED ACTION**

***Election/Restrictions***

Restriction to one of the following inventions is required under 35 U.S.C. 121:

- I. Claims 1-12, 56-57, drawn to a method of selling regulated goods over a computer network, wherein the computer network comprises a Web site of a seller and a plurality of Web clients in communication with the Web site, and wherein buyers communicate with the Web site via respective Web clients, classified in class 705, subclass 26.
- II. Claims 13-26, drawn to a method of auctioning regulated goods over a computer network, wherein the computer network comprises a Web site of a seller and a plurality of Web clients in communication with the Web site, wherein buyers communicate with the Web site via respective Web, classified in class 705, subclass 27.
- III. Claims 27-38, drawn to a system for selling regulated goods over a computer network, wherein the computer network comprises a Web site of a seller and a plurality of Web clients in communication with the Web site, and wherein buyers communicate with the Web site via respective Web clients, classified in class 705, subclass 26.
- IV. Claims 39-52, A system of auctioning regulated goods over a computer network, wherein the computer network comprises a Web site of a seller and a plurality of Web clients in communication with the Web site, wherein buyers communicate with the Web site via respective Web clients, classified in class 705, subclass 26.

- V. Claims 53-55, 58-64, drawn to a computer program product for selling regulated goods over a computer network, wherein the computer network comprises a Web site of a seller and a plurality of Web clients in communication with the Web site, and wherein buyers communicate with the Web site via respective Web clients, the computer program product comprising a computer usable storage medium having computer readable program code embodied in the medium, classified in class 705, subclass 14.
- VI. Claims 65-78, drawn to a computer program product for auctioning regulated goods over a computer network, wherein the computer network comprises a Web site of a seller and a plurality of Web clients in communication with the Web site, wherein buyers communicate with the Web site via respective Web clients, the computer program product comprising a computer usable storage medium having computer readable program code embodied in the medium, classified in class 705, subclass 14.

**Inventions I and II** are related as subcombinations disclosed as usable together in a single combination. The subcombinations are distinct from each other if they are shown to be separately usable. See MPEP § 806.05(d).

In the instant case, invention II has separate utility such as

displaying information about regulated goods to be auctioned via the Web site;  
conducting an auction over the computer network to solicit bids to purchase the regulated goods;

Because these inventions are distinct for the reasons given above and have acquired a separate status in the art because of their recognized divergent subject matter, restriction for examination purposes as indicated is proper.

**Inventions I and III** are related as process and apparatus for its practice. The inventions are distinct if it can be shown that either: (1) the process as claimed can be practiced by another and materially different apparatus or by hand, or (2) the apparatus as claimed can be used to practice another and materially different process. (MPEP § 806.05(e)). In this case the process as claimed can be practiced by another materially different apparatus such as by a computer program product for selling regulated goods over a computer network, wherein the computer network comprises a Web site of a seller and a plurality of Web clients in communication with the Web site, and wherein buyers communicate with the Web site via respective Web clients, the computer program product comprising a computer usable storage medium having computer readable program code embodied in the medium.

Because these inventions are distinct for the reasons given above and have acquired a separate status in the art because of their recognized divergent subject matter, restriction for examination purposes as indicated is proper.

**Inventions I and IV** are related as subcombinations disclosed as usable together in a single combination. The subcombinations are distinct from each other if they are shown to be separately usable. See MPEP § 806.05(d).

In the instant case, invention IV has separate utility such as

means for displaying information about regulated goods to be auctioned via the Web site;  
means for conducting an auction over the computer network to solicit bids to purchase the regulated goods;

Because these inventions are distinct for the reasons given above and have acquired a separate status in the art because of their recognized divergent subject matter, restriction for examination purposes as indicated is proper.

**Inventions I and V** are related as process and apparatus for its practice. The inventions are distinct if it can be shown that either: (1) the process as claimed can be practiced by another and materially different apparatus or by hand, or (2) the apparatus as claimed can be used to practice another and materially different process. (MPEP § 806.05(e)). In this case, the process as claimed can be practiced by another materially different apparatus such as by a system for selling regulated goods over a computer network, wherein the computer network comprises a Web site of a seller and a plurality of Web clients in communication with the Web site, and wherein buyers communicate with the Web site via respective Web clients

Because these inventions are distinct for the reasons given above and have acquired a separate status in the art because of their recognized divergent subject matter, restriction for examination purposes as indicated is proper.

**Inventions I and VI** are related as subcombinations disclosed as usable together in a single combination. The subcombinations are distinct from each other if they are shown to be separately usable. See MPEP § 806.05(d).

In the instant case, invention VI has separate utility such as

- computer readable program code that displays information about regulated goods to be auctioned via the Web site;
- computer readable program code that conducts an auction over the computer network to solicit bids to purchase the regulated goods;

Because these inventions are distinct for the reasons given above and have acquired a separate status in the art because of their recognized divergent subject matter, restriction for examination purposes as indicated is proper.

**Inventions II and III** are related as subcombinations disclosed as usable together in a single combination. The subcombinations are distinct from each other if they are shown to be separately usable. See MPEP § 806.05(d).

In the instant case, invention II has separate utility such as

displaying information about regulated goods to be auctioned via the Web site;  
conducting an auction over the computer network to solicit bids to purchase the regulated goods;

Because these inventions are distinct for the reasons given above and have acquired a separate status in the art because of their recognized divergent subject matter, restriction for examination purposes as indicated is proper.

**Inventions II and IV** are related as process and apparatus for its practice. The inventions are distinct if it can be shown that either: (1) the process as claimed can be practiced by another and materially different apparatus or by hand, or (2) the apparatus as claimed can be used to practice another and materially different process. (MPEP § 806.05(e)). In this case the process as claimed can be practiced by another different apparatus such as a computer program product for auctioning regulated goods over a computer network, wherein the computer network comprises a Web site of a seller and a plurality of Web clients in communication with the Web site, wherein buyers communicate with the Web site via respective Web clients, the computer program product comprising a computer usable storage medium having computer readable program code embodied in the medium.

Because these inventions are distinct for the reasons given above and have acquired a separate status in the art because of their recognized divergent subject matter, restriction for examination purposes as indicated is proper.

**Inventions II and V** are related as subcombinations disclosed as usable together in a single combination. The subcombinations are distinct from each other if they are shown to be separately usable. See MPEP § 806.05(d).

In the instant case, invention II has separate utility such as

displaying information about regulated goods to be auctioned via the Web site;  
conducting an auction over the computer network to solicit bids to purchase the regulated goods;

Because these inventions are distinct for the reasons given above and have acquired a separate status in the art because of their recognized divergent subject matter, restriction for examination purposes as indicated is proper.

**Inventions II and VI** are related as process and apparatus for its practice. The inventions are distinct if it can be shown that either: (1) the process as claimed can be practiced by another and materially different apparatus or by hand, or (2) the apparatus as claimed can be used to practice another and materially different process. (MPEP § 806.05(e)). In this case the process as claimed can be practiced by another different apparatus such as a system of auctioning regulated goods over a computer network, wherein the computer network comprises a Web site of a seller and a plurality of Web clients in communication with the Web site, wherein buyers communicate with the Web site via respective Web clients.

Because these inventions are distinct for the reasons given above and have acquired a separate status in the art because of their recognized divergent subject matter, restriction for examination purposes as indicated is proper.



**Inventions III and IV** are related as subcombinations disclosed as usable together in a single combination. The subcombinations are distinct from each other if they are shown to be separately usable. See MPEP § 806.05(d).

In the instant case, invention IV has separate utility such as

means for displaying information about regulated goods to be auctioned via the Web site;  
means for conducting an auction over the computer network to solicit bids to purchase the regulated goods;

Because these inventions are distinct for the reasons given above and have acquired a separate status in the art because of their recognized divergent subject matter, restriction for examination purposes as indicated is proper.

**Inventions III and V** are related as subcombinations disclosed as usable together in a single combination. The subcombinations are distinct from each other if they are shown to be separately usable. See MPEP § 806.05(d).

In the instant case, invention V has separate utility such as

...computer program product comprising a computer usable storage medium having computer readable program code embodied in the medium...

Because these inventions are distinct for the reasons given above and have acquired a separate status in the art because of their recognized divergent subject matter, restriction for examination purposes as indicated is proper.

**Inventions III and VI** are related as subcombinations disclosed as usable together in a single combination. The subcombinations are distinct from each other if they are shown to be separately usable. See MPEP § 806.05(d).

In the instant case, invention VI has separate utility such as

computer readable program code that displays information about regulated goods to be auctioned via the Web site;

Art Unit: 3625

computer readable program code that conducts an auction over the computer network to solicit bids to purchase the regulated goods;

Because these inventions are distinct for the reasons given above and have acquired a separate status in the art because of their recognized divergent subject matter, restriction for examination purposes as indicated is proper.

**Inventions IV and V** are related as subcombinations disclosed as usable together in a single combination. The subcombinations are distinct from each other if they are shown to be separately usable. See MPEP § 806.05(d).

In the instant case, invention IV has separate utility such as

means for displaying information about regulated goods to be auctioned via the Web site;  
means for conducting an auction over the computer network to solicit bids to purchase the regulated goods;

Because these inventions are distinct for the reasons given above and have acquired a separate status in the art because of their recognized divergent subject matter, restriction for examination purposes as indicated is proper.

**Inventions IV and VI** are related as subcombinations disclosed as usable together in a single combination. The subcombinations are distinct from each other if they are shown to be separately usable. See MPEP § 806.05(d).

In the instant case, invention IV has separate utility such as

...computer program product comprising a computer usable storage medium having computer readable program code embodied in the medium...

Because these inventions are distinct for the reasons given above and have acquired a separate status in the art because of their recognized divergent subject matter, restriction for examination purposes as indicated is proper.

**Inventions V and VI** are related as subcombinations disclosed as usable together in a single combination. The subcombinations are distinct from each other if they are shown to be separately usable. See MPEP § 806.05(d).

In the instant case, invention VI has separate utility such as

computer readable program code that displays information about regulated goods to be auctioned via the Web site;  
computer readable program code that conducts an auction over the computer network to solicit bids to purchase the regulated goods;

Because these inventions are distinct for the reasons given above and have acquired a separate status in the art because of their recognized divergent subject matter, restriction for examination purposes as indicated is proper.

### ***Rejoinder***

The examiner has required restriction between product and process claims. Where applicant elects claims directed to the product, and the product claims are subsequently found allowable, withdrawn process claims that depend from or otherwise require all the limitations of the allowable product claim will be considered for rejoinder. All claims directed a nonelected process invention must require all the limitations of an allowable product claim for that process invention to be rejoined.

In the event of rejoinder, the requirement for restriction between the product claims and the rejoined process claims will be withdrawn, and the rejoined process claims will be fully examined for patentability in accordance with 37 CFR 1.104. Thus, to be allowable, the rejoined claims must meet all criteria for patentability including the requirements of 35 U.S.C. 101, 102, 103 and 112. Until all claims to the elected product

Art Unit: 3625

are found allowable, an otherwise proper restriction requirement between product claims and process claims may be maintained. Withdrawn process claims that are not commensurate in scope with an allowable product claim will not be rejoined. See MPEP § 821.04(b). Additionally, in order to retain the right to rejoinder in accordance with the above policy, applicant is advised that the process claims should be amended during prosecution to require the limitations of the product claims. **Failure to do so may result in a loss of the right to rejoinder.** Further, note that the prohibition against double patenting rejections of 35 U.S.C. 121 does not apply where the restriction requirement is withdrawn by the examiner before the patent issues. See MPEP § 804.01.

### ***Conclusion***

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to James H. Zurita whose telephone number is 571-272-6766. The examiner can normally be reached on 8a-5pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Jeffrey A. Smith, can be reached on 571-272-6763. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Art Unit: 3625

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

**James Zurita**  
**Primary Patent Examiner**  
**Art Unit 3625**  
2 June 2006

*James Zurita*  
*Primary Examiner*